

Hello. My name is Timothy John Ramirez. I am a singer/songwriter/musician.

I work professionally as an indie artist and release my music outside of a record label. I have released two CDs of my own and have appeared on other indie releases by other indie artists as well. I am a member of ASCAP (American Society of Composers Authors and Publishers) I am a voting member of the Recording Academy (NARAS) and have voted in the last three Grammy Award Ceremonies. I play hundreds of gigs each year.

Being an independent artist means that it is very difficult to get radio stations to play your music. Most radio stations only play music by artists on major labels who have very deep pockets and can afford the promotional dollars necessary to get their artists songs on the majority of radio stations.

In spite of this I still have managed to get some radio airplay on the few radio stations that are independent and not owned by the monopolies of Clear Channel Communications, CBS Media, etc.

Here in Southern CA we do have a radio station called Indie 103.1 FM that actually plays music by local and unsigned artists. Before them all the radio aisplay I have recieved has been from smaller independent stations in other states and international stations which are are far more open to me than the stations in my home state.

Local Talk Radio stations allow local listeners to call in and voice their opinions. Sports stations should also have room for local community sports. Music Stations should also make room for local music. This kind of programming should not take place at 3 am in the morning when the majority of the local community cannot listen but should take place at a time when the majority of the local community can appreciate and enjoy it.

Payola continues to exist. Somtimes it is referred to as advertising dollars or promotional dollars, sometimes it amounts to gifts given to the station and or members of it's staff by the record label, but it is Payola just the same.

Payments made to indie promoters are the most common and should be considered payola.

Some record labels purchase airtime and fill that airtime with he broadcasting of their bands songs (In their entirety). This practice should not be allowed because it is used to falsely manipulate radio charts and give a false sense of the popularity of the band/artist and the song. Labels should only be allowed to purchase commercial airtime to run an actual commercial (For their artitst) and not to falsely inflate the number of spins their artist is actually recieving.

I believe that Voice Tracking is inconsistant with a stations obligation to serve the local community. It is an act of deception that Broadcasters mislead the public regarding the point of origin of their broadcasts.

The radio station monopolies of companies like Clear Channel are the reason we now have national playlists. Not only does localism suffer as a result of this, but so does the entire music industry.

National playlists are created and influenced by various forms of payola

and implemented on a nationwide level.

Before these monopolies (Even with Payola), it was easier for more artists to get airplay in smaller markets first and work their way up to bigger markets based on positive response from the listening public. This created more choices for music buying public and contributed to a healthier music industry and in turns contributes to a healthier economy. Under the current system the public has no real voice in what they hear. Listener call in lines are ignored by the stations program directors. I know this firsthand from having worked at one of the largest rock radios stations in LA. Every day listeners would call in and make their requests known to the station. Each day the volunteers woking the listener line would bring up their requests to the program directors office and each day the listsener requests would be thrown out.

I think that LPFM stations are a positive thing and would like to see more of them. They can also benifit the local community and the local music community.

I want to thank you for taking the time and allowing me the opportunity to share my thoughts on this matter.

Thank you

TJR